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ABSTRACT

Summarized in this report are the views of 14 labor officials interviewed in the spring of 1991 regarding their attitudes toward the youth apprenticeship approach, which has been gaining support in educational and legislative sectors. Their views are expressed around the following seven themes organized as sections of the report: (1) six major hurdles facing noncollege-bound youth; (2) eight reasons to be positive about the youth apprenticeship model; (3) 11 areas of concern regarding the youth apprenticeship model and suggested solutions; (4) linkages between youth apprenticeship and existing registered apprenticeship programs; (5) the applicability of the youth apprenticeship model in various industries; (6) roles for unions in the youth apprenticeship system; and (7) union experiences operating traditional apprenticeship and job training programs that could be applicable to the youth apprenticeship approach. Quotations from the union officials interviewed are woven throughout the report. Four appendixes include a list of the union officials interviewed, an interview guide, a summary of the youth apprenticeship movement conference report, and essential elements of model youth apprenticeship programs. (KC)

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A Report for
Jobs for the Future

Union Perspectives on New Work-based Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives

Researched and Written by

Carol Shenon
Human Resources Development Institute, AFL-CIO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Jobs for the Future

January 1992

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Jobs for the Future, Inc. (JFF) develops ideas, information, strategy and systems that build the capacity of the American workforce to meet the critical skill and quality needs of our growing high performance economy. Jobs for the Future knows that to make good choices, we must nurture a public culture that is not afraid of change, but welcomes and uses it. Founded in 1983 as a non-profit organization, JFF works with business, government and community leaders to anticipate and diagnose economic change, organize partnerships to address development challenges, devise effective initiatives to support human investment, and promote further program and policy innovation through evaluation and advocacy.

A Report for
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Union Perspectives on New Work-based Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives

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Foreword

This report was commissioned by Jobs for the Future, a non-profit organization that studies and analyzes workforce preparation, economic development, and education. In 1990, Jobs for the Future (JFF) embarked on a multi-year program to explore the potential of strategies that offer a more structured transition from high school to high skill careers for American young people who are unlikely to complete four years of college. This effort to adapt the lessons of European systems of school-to-work transition to economic and educational realities in this country is frequently labelled "youth apprenticeship:" apprenticeship, because at the heart of these systems is the integration of school and workplace learning and an emphasis on learning-by-doing under the tutelage of experts; and youth, because these systems address the absorption of young people into the labor market.

As part of its research and development program, JFF provides support and technical assistance to demonstration projects that link employers, secondary schools and post-secondary institutions in the development and implementation of new programs integrating school and work-based learning. In addition, JFF studies and addresses policy issues likely to have an impact on the evolution of youth apprenticeship in this country. In both the site-specific and policy-oriented activities, JFF is committed t o identifying obstacles and constraints to progress—and to proposing solutions.

One issue of critical importance to the success or failure of efforts to connect high school students' school and work experiences more closely—at the local, state, or national levels—is the role of organized labor. How will union leaders view this kind of work-based learning experiment for young people? How will they respond? Will they be resistant or supportive? Will they be involved early in planning or remain on the sidelines?

European youth apprenticeship systems are concentrated in countries with high levels of unionization, such as Germany and Denmark. There, trade unions play an active and essential role in maintaining and improving the system. Unions participate in determining what the training curriculum should cover. They work collaboratively with employers to ensure that their nation's workforce—from entry-level up—is highly skilled and able to respond flexibly and creatively to changing conditions in the world economy. They are also the institution that looks out for the interests of the individual apprentices.

In the United States, organized labor's role in workforce preparation and training has historically been more narrow. One reason is that the rate of unionization is lower than in most European countries. Moreover, neither our nation's employers nor the federal government have made workforce preparation a central policy priority. Federal programs have been relatively small, have focused on the most disadvantaged, and have not been

universally available. Employers in this country, persuaded by Taylorist models of work organization, have tended to invest little in the education and training of their non-supervisory workforce.

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The area where U.S. labor unions have played an important role in training has been in the apprenticeship system, particularly in the building and construction trades. Unions have learned a great deal over the years about how to create structured programs of learning-by-doing that graduate highly skilled, productive workers. However, this system is relatively small: it serves only a few hundred thousand people a year. It is concentrated in only a few industry clusters. Most important, it provides training to few young people under twenty-one.

During the past few years, as interest in European models of school-to-work transition has grown and as the idea of "youth apprenticeship" has begun to spread, the question of organized labor's reactions and role has come to the fore. Some within labor question how well the U.S. will be able to adapt European models of school-to-work without the institutional, political and social systems that have given rise to them. Because of the new (and still imprecise) use of the term apprenticeship in discussions of preparing young people in school for career advancement, some trade union leaders and officials have feared the worst—an attempt to undercut the existing apprenticeship system and to weaken industry training standards in unionized sectors. Some simply resent the appropriation of the word "apprenticeship." Others have expressed fears that a focus on high-skill training for young people might come at the expense of incumbent, unionized employees. Some have felt left out of the debate. Overall there has been a good deal of heat and not much light.

Given this situation, Jobs for the Future commissioned the Human Resources Development Institute of the AFL-CIO to explore and report on the views of a range of union officials on the subject of youth apprenticeship strategies for the U.S. HRDI, already involved in defining issues of school-to-work transition for young people, agreed to conduct a series of interviews and to prepare a report. The document that follows is a strong, clear summary of those interviews.

The results are fascinating—and encouraging. Chock full of quotes from the fourteen interviewees, the report makes for interesting and fresh reading. More importantly, it serves as an important first step in clarifying the key concerns of organized labor's training experts about the youth apprenticeship model and approach. The report makes it obvious that labor has some serious substantive concerns. In addition, the report reveals deep sympathy and support among labor leaders for programs designed to provide the "Forgotten Half" with opportunities to develop skills that will enable them to pursue satisfying, well-paying careers.

The trade unionists interviewed were generally passionate about the plight of the non-college youth population and saw the need for improvement in the way many young people move out of high school into work

and adult responsibility. As a group, they saw the virtues of efforts to motivate young people to learn through a closer integration of school and work, through greater interaction between young people and adults, and through more active and contextual instructional strategies. They emphasized the importance of developing skills that will be useful in tomorrow's workplaces, being exposed to a range of career choices, and having the apprenticeship model extended to new industries.

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At the same time, the interviewees raised a number of specific concerns. Most important was the concern that youth apprenticeship programs, if not designed carefully, might replace incumbent, unionized workers and, over time, weaken the integrity and effectiveness of bargaining units. There was broad consensus that employers should not train young people without putting resources into retraining and upgrading the existing workforce as well. Union representatives also argued that if programs were poorly designed, youth apprentices might be trained too narrowly, might have less time to develop basic skill proficiencies, and might forfeit the opportunity to advance academically or occupationally. They raised practical considerations, too. Several questioned whether enough apprenticeable positions could be identified for young people, i.e. whether employers would make the commitment to train large numbers of young people. Others focused on finances: What will these programs cost? Who will pay for it? Will the programs disappear when the funding dries up?

The union officials interviewed were candid in their appraisals of whether they saw a place for youth apprenticeship programs in their industries and whether youth apprenticeship could be easily linked to existing training structures. By and large, resistance was greatest from the building trades sector, whose representatives felt that their existing programs would be compromised if youth apprenticeship were introduced in their sector. In other sectors—manufacturing and service/public—reaction was mixed. Representatives of industrial unions were supportive of youth apprenticeship as a strategy for increasing the interest of employers in high quality training and for developing a system of skill credentials. At the same time, though, these trade unionists were skeptical about whether employers would invest in such a program, given competitive pressures and economic uncertainty. Service and public sector union officials interviewed for this report were also generally supportive of bringing the concepts of youth apprenticeship into their sectors. Yet for these individuals, as for all those interviewed, there was unanimity that new programs or systems should not be created at the expense of training and employment opportunities for existing workers, including career ladder and other upgrading programs.

The interviews conducted for this report revealed the breadth of experience, knowledge, and perspective that exists within the union movement. On few questions did the opinions break down neatly by industrial sector. On many issues, there was as much diversity of opinion within as between sectors.

The officials who were interviewed offered a number of specific suggestions for how some of the problems and fears they raise might be addressed. Some suggestions were about process: bring unions into the process early and fully, so their experience and perspective can help influence program design; provide unions with a significant, rather than token, role in program planning and monitoring; create an atmosphere based on trust and cooperation; do the work at the local level to generate local union involvement and investment. Some were about content: for example, youth apprenticeship programs should stress the dignity of labor and the importance of banding together to win benefits as a group. And some were about context: the term "apprenticeship" should be reserved for traditional registered programs; in addition, youth apprenticeship efforts should not proceed in a vacuum and should not grow at the expense of training for incumbent workers. Clearly, for youth apprenticeship strategies to be widely embraced by organized labor, they will have to be part of a broad workforce development and training strategy for both young people and adult workers.

Union representatives stressed that there is a lot to learn from existing union apprenticeship programs, particularly in the building and construction trades: these programs have had significant experience with national standard-setting processes, development of national curricula and portable credentials, updating curricula to respond to technological change, and combining on-the-job and classroom instruction. As a group, the participants in this project hoped that their knowledge and experience will be taken seriously, valued highly, and used to strengthen and improve the current wave of experimentation with youth apprenticeship. This publication is an attempt to bring that knowledge and perspective to bear.

Jobs for the Future would like to thank Carol Shenon of the Human Resources Development Institute, AFL-CIO, for her work in preparing this report. We also want to thank Mike McMillan, Executive Director of HRDI, for his interest in this project. Most important, we want to thank the fourteen union officials who gave generously of their time and who spoke frankly and openly. We think this report goes a long way toward clarifying opinions within the labor movement on youth apprenticeship and other work-based strategies for a more structured transition to employment and adulthood for young people. We see this as the first step in an important dialogue; and we hope that those who read this report will become a part of that conversation.

Richard Kazis
Director, Work-based Learning Programs
Jobs for the Future

I. Background

They are called the "Forgotten Half," the estimated 20 million young people who will complete their formal education upon leaving high school, with or without a diploma. Without adequate skills and experience, a majority of these youth face an uncertain and unpleasant future.

Unlike other industrialized countries, the United States has failed to develop a comprehensive strategy for preparing these work-bound youth for employment. While some programs do exist to help them make the transition between school and the world of work, these projects are the exception rather than the rule.

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A growing number of educators, cognitive theorists, and policymakers believe apprenticeship is an excellent model for helping to solve the school-to-work transition problem. Under the traditional apprenticeship system, apprentices work under the supervision of skilled craftspersons to gain practical experience in a specific trade and also attend formal related classroom instruction throughout the duration of their programs. While the minimum term of an apprenticeship is one year, the average program lasts from three to five years, depending on standards established for the craft.

Eighty-five percent of the approximately 43,000 apprenticeship programs in this country are operated "unilaterally" by employers; however, they often only sponsor one or two apprentices. By far, the largest programs are jointly run by a group of employers and a union and contain a majority of the apprenticeship positions available. More than 50 percent of registered apprentices are found in union-involved programs in the building, construction, and metal trades. These strong and highly-praised joint efforts form the core of the American apprenticeship system. Unfortunately, only a handful of American high school students currently enters these programs upon graduation.

Recently, organizations in the employment and training community, along with some state governments and foundations, have begun to explore the development of a national "youth apprenticeship" system modeled on European experience as the cornerstone of a comprehensive school-to-work strategy. At the December 7, 1990, conference on **Youth Apprenticeship, American Style** held in Washington, D.C., youth apprenticeship was defined as "a systematic mix of academic instruction in secondary and post-secondary schools with employment-based training for students at a level of quality sufficient to certify the ability of individuals to perform entry-level tasks in skilled occupations capably and professionally." Stephen Hamilton, in his book **Apprenticeship for Adulthood: Preparing Youth for the Future**, more broadly interprets this term as "referring not only to a formal on-the-job training program, but also to a range of less intense and broadly focused educational experiences outside of school classrooms."

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One vision of the possible structure of an American youth apprenticeship system, that of American University economist Robert Lerman, looks like this: Occupational and career exploration (i.e., site visits, work "shadowing," job sampling and employer visits to schools) would occur between the 7th and 9th grades. The following year, career counseling would commence, and the students would interview employers and try to obtain apprenticeship positions and contracts. They would also have the option to pursue a purely academic education. During the last two years of high school, these young people would spend a portion of their day/week in academic classes applicable to the "world of work" and "technical and occupational" courses geared specifically to their chosen fields, and the remaining time learning at a worksite. The time spent on the job would increase from 30 percent to more than 50 percent of their day/week over the two year period. At the completion of their senior year, the students would take a test qualifying them for their diplomas and allowing them to continue in their programs. The final year or two would entail attending community college courses while spending a majority of their time "at the worksite developing their skills in preparation for their final certification examination." Following the test, participants could opt to stay with their present employer, continue their education, or use their portable credentials to find employment elsewhere.

Around the country, at the state and local levels, there is growing interest in experimenting with youth apprenticeship initiatives in industries as varied as metalworking, allied health, finance, and electronics. As these efforts develop, they are testing a range of program designs that fit local conditions. According to Jobs for the Future, a non-profit organization that studies and analyzes workforce preparation, economic development, and education, these efforts, at a minimum, share the following elements:

1. Work experience and guided learning opportunities provided for participants by employers within an industry or occupation cluster;

2. A structured linkage between secondary and post-secondary components of the program, leading to a high school diploma, postsecondary credential, and certification of occupational skills; and

3. Close integration of academic and vocational learning and of school and workplace experiences through planning and ongoing collaboration between schools, employers, relevant unions, and other key institutions and through innovations in curriculum and instructional strategies in the classroom and at work.

Appendix D outlines Jobs for the Future's view of the "essential elements" of youth apprenticeship.

II. The Interviews

To gain insight into union views concerning the youth apprenticeship concept, the Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI), the employment and training arm of the AFL-CIO, conducted interviews with 14 labor officials from the service/public sector, the industrial manufacturing sector, and the building and construction trades. (A list of the participants is included in Appendix A.) The individuals' comments were based on their past experiences with employment and training programs, including apprenticeship, and their knowledge of related issues and concerns. For background information on the youth apprenticeship approach, a summary prepared by Jobs for the Future was distributed to these officials prior to the interviews.

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During the sessions, these union representatives offered their opinions on:

- Obstacles preventing large numbers of young people from obtaining jobs with career advancement potential, opportunities for skilled work, and a living wage;
- Positive aspects of the youth apprenticeship model;
- Concerns regarding the youth apprenticeship model and suggested solutions;
- The compatibility of this proposed system and the existing system of registered apprenticeship;
- The appropriateness of youth apprenticeship as a model for training new workers for their respective industries;
- Union involvement in relation to efforts to test this approach; and
- Lessons gleaned from union experiences with training programs that might be applicable to the youth apprenticeship model.

A. Obstacles Facing Non-college Bound Youth

The labor officials interviewed identified six obstacles impeding non-college bound youth from securing jobs offering advancement potential, skilled work, and an acceptable wage. These hurdles include: the failure to possess the skills required by today's and tomorrow's employers; the absence of public policies creating a national school-to-work transition system and targeting funds and services towards youth who are not currently "at-risk;" the lack of investment in training in certain industries; the scarcity of jobs suited to the young people's skill levels; the young persons' troubled backgrounds and this factor's impact on their future prospects; the negative consequences of a decentralized education system; and an underdeveloped work ethic among young people.

Lack of Skills. Numerous labor representatives noted students' lack of basic academic skills or the additional skills required for success in the workplaces of the future.

"What is coming out of the schools these days is horrible. The transcripts that some of the students graduate with are just awful. I never thought you could graduate with an average that's under 65 percent. I don't think the schools should graduate them if they don't make the grades. I don't think they prepare them that well for what's out in the field."
—Building Trades Official

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Poor academic skills attainment in high school and its effect on work-bound youths' job prospects was emphasized by two other building trades and four service/public sector officials. Each of these individuals placed at least partial blame on the school system for this failure and expressed frustration with a high school diploma's lack of meaning. As one representative put it, "Years ago, a high school diploma meant something. Now you're not even assured that a person can read, write, or do basic arithmetic."

One building trades interviewee mentioned U.S. students' poor standing in international comparisons. "We know from all of these studies that are done that the educational system in the United States is in trouble. We're behind in science. We're behind in math. We're behind in this, that, and the other thing compared with Japan, Germany, etc. I've also done some work in Poland. This is a suppressed, oppressed society . . . very, very poor to the point of not even having toilet tissue. They don't have anything, but they can all read."

Discussing their unions' experiences, two of the four service/public sector representatives also indicated that while some of the occupations they represent do not require a high level of skills, they demand, at a minimum, the academic capabilities accompanying a good high school education. One talked about his cashiers training program which served high school students and dropouts. "Some of the kids didn't make our program, and the reason they couldn't make it was because they couldn't count money. It's sad to think that we have people in this country today that can't make change. Now some of these people that didn't make the cashiers training, we were able to get them jobs in a bakery or deli where they didn't have to make change or anything like that. In the bakery, all they had to do was slice the bread or wait on the customers. While in the deli, all they had to do was weigh it, and the machine told them how much it was, and they wrote it on there and gave it to the customer. We were able to accommodate a few like that, but in large, the ones that didn't make the minimal test . . . we couldn't help them."

While other officials discussed the basic skills deficiencies of youth, an industrial manufacturing sector representative talked about the need for students to obtain a new set of skills required by the changing nature of work. "Our schools prepare kids very well for a mass production society or economy, but they are not preparing young people very well for highly flexible production and high performance work. In the words of **A Nation at Risk**, our schools are 'behind the pace of change.' The work is changing and the schools haven't."

Public Policy Failures. The failure of the federal government to develop public policies to assist youth who are not immediately "at-risk" was a problem identified by two service/public sector officials.

"We don't have a program in this country that really makes school a part of the world of work. There's no connection. We tend to leave an awful lot up to not just the local government, but to the families and to the individuals. If they're not going on to college, our kids, for the most part, don't see much of a reason for continuing on in school." Another service/public sector representative expressed a similar concern over the United States' failure to develop a coherent, accessible national system for helping non-college bound youth make the transition between school and the world of work.

This interviewee also believed the government must target more employment and training programs and resources toward those youth who are not presently "at-risk." "There is a public policy failure in education and training policy in the United States that has historically operated at the margins, around the fringes. The public policy, at least nationally driven, has been to focus exclusively on the Job Training Partnership Act and others which are for dislocated workers and at-risk people . . . " While he stressed that these groups need special attention, he pointed out that "we have neglected the overwhelming majority of kids and workers in terms of their preparation for work by focusing on those who are most in-need."

Lack of Investment in Training. Two industrial manufacturing sector and one building trades officials discussed the inadequacy of training in their industries and this situation's impact on youth.

According to an official of one industrial union, "Management and personnel used to be run by people who came out of the system and understood what it takes to make a good product: the workers have to be trained, and they have to have skills. The people who are now making decisions on training are financial people, and I think many of them, up to now, haven't seen the real value of training and saw it as a red line item that was very costly. So when they wanted to cut somewhere, they cut into training and said they'd hire people that have the skills. Well, with the new technology and the shortage of people . . . they're not out there. They're caught in their own trap. No one is saying there aren't people that need to be trained. No one is saying that the apprenticeship system isn't a good way to train. Nonetheless, employers are not hiring apprentices, and they're not training people."

The other industrial manufacturing sector official mirrored these concerns. He was also dismayed at the skills shortages in his industry, the lack of training that is taking place, and the possible consequences. "I don't know how industry can expect to survive. This leads you to believe that if they're not training anybody . . . and they're not setting up any programs, they're going to be leaving you pretty darn soon and probably for foreign shores. This is very disturbing. These companies are not standing up to

their responsibilities of seeing that people are properly trained for the job, especially jobs for the future. I really believe that some of the companies are talking out of both sides of their mouths. They're looking at the profits and not the training."

Furthermore, a building trades official mentioned the unwillingness of the employers in his industry to risk investing in young people. He discussed their preference for "seasoned" individuals as participants in their apprenticeship programs.

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Nature of Youth Labor Market. While one industrial union representative disagreed, two other industrial manufacturing sector officials and two service/public sector representatives suggested that the changing structure of job opportunities in this country was an obstacle to work-bound youth.

One industrial manufacturing sector official cited the impact of international competition. "There are not too many jobs to be had. We're losing most of our jobs to foreign competition, and truthfully, this is a very discouraging thing for our youth since they see nothing for a future out there. There are no career opportunities for them."

Another industrial union representative stated that the skills needed for employment are quickly rising, and if employers are not willing to provide training, there will not be enough low skill jobs available to accommodate these young people. Similarly, two service/public sector officials agreed the labor market is tight for many youth. In contrast, while concurring that young people may have a more difficult time securing employment, the third industrial manufacturing sector interviewee felt there are "a lot of perfectly good jobs out there which have provided people with a living wage. They have supported families on these incomes and so forth. But if they don't fit into the glamorous future, then people believe they're not anything that we should encourage anyone to do."

Troubled Backgrounds. "If you have one-fifth of the children in America living in poverty and you have big problems in the urban areas, the education system and society in general have not served these young people well. They don't have the capacity to function in the workplace."
—Service/Public Sector Official

This same individual expressed the need to remove the barriers erected by youths' troubled backgrounds that hinder not only their performance on the job, but their growth into adulthood.

Decentralized Education System. "We have 50 states and [close to] 16,000 school districts in this country, and we have a tradition of decentralized education. While that has great advantages, it has disadvantages if you

look at a nation trying to compete internationally. We have to address [the problems with the education system] as a national issue."
—Service/Public Sector Official

As a part of this national solution, he felt the U.S. must develop "national standards, a system of national assessment to determine whether or not people have met those standards, and some kind of portable certification system so that a certificate can be taken from one part of the country to another to prove that the standard was met." Another individual from this sector also mentioned the need for competency standards to improve the United States' education system.

Poor Work Attitudes. Excluding those in traditional apprenticeship programs, one building trades representative believed the attitude of today's youth "toward employment is: 'I work from X to X, and that's it. The least amount I can do for the same amount of money . . . that's what I'm going to accomplish.'"

While this individual admitted this was a generalization, he insisted that the lack of desire among many young people to learn, to improve their performance, and to become more productive workers was a serious barrier to advancement.

B. Positive Aspects of the Youth Apprenticeship Model

The union officials enumerated eight positive aspects of the youth apprenticeship approach. This model provides a transition to work and adulthood; enhances skills training; expands the highly praised traditional apprenticeship approach into non-traditional areas; exposes young people to a variety of potential occupations; provides contextual learning; motivates young people to learn; promotes the interaction of youth and adults; and establishes connections that could result in permanent job offers.

Provides Transition to Work and Adulthood. By offering youth a link between school and the next phase of their lives, one person from each of the three sectors stated that the basic concept of this model is very valuable. One industrial union representative also appreciated that the United States was learning from our foreign competitors and applying this successful element of their programs.

Enhances Skills Training. Many of the union officials interviewed felt that, if structured correctly, this model could help youth learn valuable job and related skills.

"I like the idea of the kids spending time at a job during the last two years of high school. They would actually be learning a skill which is very positive, and they won't be getting that elsewhere," stated one service/public sector representative. Another interviewee from this sector liked the fact the young people would acquire these skills in a "controlled

environment" (i.e., on a "training basis as opposed to a doing basis"). In other words, the training would be geared towards the needs and abilities of the youth, rather than the desire of the company to produce a product.

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Others felt this youth apprenticeship approach could provide the flexible skills required by tomorrow's workforce. One industrial union official hoped it would eliminate "the old Taylorism model of a person doing just one thing . . . What we're talking about now is the new skills that are needed. You need to know more than one thing so you have to train differently for that. To use the apprenticeship model of having on-the-job training and related instruction is a good way to go. It gives them more of a broad based and in-depth knowledge." Concurring with the need for a new set of skills in the workplace, a service/public sector representative believed the U.S. needs to "create a workforce that has high skills so that we enable employers to move to high performance workplaces. If they don't have the workers, companies will dumb down, move to Mexico, or follow other strategies . . . Schools need to restructure the same way that corporations are and teach kids in a very different way and in very different skills."

Finally, one service/public sector official felt the approach could assist the youth in "learning to learn." By getting used to learning skills at an early age, she hoped an individual would be more apt to continue to learn them at a later age.

Expands Apprenticeship Model into Non-traditional Areas. "I believe expanding the traditional apprenticeship model into non-traditional areas would be very helpful in developing a skilled workforce in this country in all of these areas so that we can compete."—Service/Public Sector Official

A fellow service/public sector representative agreed the highly effective apprenticeship training model should be applied to as many jobs as possible, and additionally, derivations of the model could possibly be designed to accommodate those occupations that don't adhere to the traditional approach.

Exposes Youth to Occupations. "One of the positive aspects is that you're getting students that are not college-bound and you're introducing them to a career, or a field, or something. What you're doing is helping them to decide do I want this or do I want something different."
—Building Trades Official

One additional building trades, two industrial manufacturing sector, and four service/public sector officials also mentioned that exposure to occupations was a positive aspect of the youth apprenticeship model and could offer insight into various careers or even help the youth determine their career goals. One of the four service/public sector interviewees cautioned, however, that "you can't take the kids on field trips once a

week." He stressed the necessity of integrating this exposure into their existing school curriculum.

Provides Contextual Learning. "[This approach] has the potential of linking school and work much more closely which allows you to pick up on all the research that shows the best way to learn is through contextual learning . . . learning in a context that we now don't do a lot of in our classrooms in elementary and secondary schools. Now, they'll learn math, and then they'll go into the workplace where they'll need that math and they can't apply it. A good youth apprenticeship program would allow kids to understand the context in which they're going to use their learning." —Service/Public Sector Official

While a building trades official agreed that learning is most effective in a real-life context, he felt the "life experience" element doesn't have to be on a job site, but, instead, the relevance of math and other subjects and skills can be explained by a high school instructor in the classroom.

Motivates Youth to Learn. "The primary positive aspect [of youth apprenticeship] is for kids early on to have the sense that their education is leading towards something meaningful, that it is not a waste of time, and that they're not a fool for taking it seriously. To me, that is the most positive [aspect]."—Service/Public Sector Official

Other officials, two from the service/public sector and one from the industrial manufacturing sector, also mentioned that this type of system could provide youth with hope for the future and the motivation to strive for their goals. A service/public sector representative felt that the youth apprenticeship model could teach young people not to limit themselves, and that it's "not bad not to go to college. There are other jobs that you can do that will give you a decent life." Another service/public sector official believed parents will also have to be educated that "just because your child does not go on to college doesn't mean he or she is not going to lead a good, productive life. In some areas, there is a stigma that if your children don't go to college; they're losers."

Similarly, an industrial union official stated and another service/public sector representative agreed that this approach could "show kids that there is going to be something for them if they choose to go the work route. If that is given to them and it gives them the direction to go and they can see a future for themselves, then this is going to entice the kids into doing much more than they're doing today."

Promotes Youth/Adult Interaction. "I think the interaction between kids and adults is very important. We've gotten away from that in this country. Hopefully, a young person would work with an older person that they would like to emulate or that they look up to. The kids would spend much more time in the adult world and, hopefully, aspire to take a place in it." —Service/Public Sector Official.

Establishes Job Connections. One service/public sector official hoped that during the time a student worked on site, a relationship would be established with the employer that would lead to a job following graduation.

C. Concerns Regarding the Youth Apprenticeship Model and Suggested Solutions

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The labor representatives mentioned eleven concerns regarding the youth apprenticeship model. Suggestions were offered for overcoming several of these problems. Interviewees feared that this model could impact negatively on incumbent workers; promote the use of youth as cheap labor sources; deepen basic skills deficiencies; close future career and/or educational options; dilute the meaning of the term "apprenticeship;" and overexpand participation in the traditional apprenticeship programs. Additional issues pertaining to program funding, union orientation, job security, and wages and working conditions were also raised.

Negative Impact on Incumbent Workers. Emphasized by five service/public sector, four building trades, and two industrial manufacturing sector officials, the most common concern regarding this model was its potential negative impact on incumbent workers.

"You want to ensure that kids placed in an apprenticeship program are not used to replace existing unionized workers, existing workers anywhere, but particularly unionized workers. So that you would not fire someone who is making 15 bucks an hour and replace him/her with one of the apprentices who was brought in at minimum wage."
—Service/Public Sector Official

Two additional service/public sector representatives agreed. To avoid union member anxiety and potential problems, one mentioned it "is something that has to be worked through, and our members have to be educated on it." A third drew lessons from the CETA program. "CETA employees were paid minimum wage or subminimum wage. The employers got waivers for it. The participants weren't doing anything but taking hours away from someone else who could actually make more money. It was misused. It was misdirected. That's one thing you have to gear up and guard against the most . . . abuse of programs. What they say they're doing with it and what they're actually doing with it are many times not the same thing." A building trades official also agreed this potential existed, especially during "bad times, like right now." He believed, however, that if programs are restricted "to familiarization to the job, more or less as helpers on the job or as aides to get acclimated to the job conditions and to introduce them to just what they see there, then this problem could be lessened." While both individuals agreed in theory that building in penalties and monitoring could avoid some of these problems, they were skeptical regarding the government's enforcement capabilities.

The same service/public sector representative also worried that if employers could easily gain waivers from the government, they could undermine the bargaining unit. "If there are enough waivers and enough special considerations, pretty soon you look at the bargaining unit and you don't represent a majority anymore."

Several interviewees feared a gradual undermining of incumbent workers' jobs. "It's not that the employer would lay people off, but as attrition took place, they would not replace people, and then they would functionalize the job tasks so that the students would do the simple things that don't take experience and skill and the other workers would do the more difficult tasks," explained one service/public sector representative. A building trades official voiced similar fears that youths earning a training wage could take over various aspects of a journeyman's job until nothing remained.

Expressing a more general concern, another building trades official emphatically stated, "So far as we're concerned for our industry, there isn't one job task that would not take away from someone already employed on a full-time basis."

An additional building trades member worried about the incumbent workers' loss in productivity and/or pay. "If you take a youth around and show them what you do on the job, then you're not going to have peak production. And if you're on a task system and you can turn out 20 widgets a day and you only turned out 15 widgets, you're going to get a pay cut."

Another issue raised by two service/public sector and two industrial manufacturing sector officials concerned the creation of a youth corps that would have the skills employers needed, and as the technology progressed, the older workers would be rendered useless as their skills became obsolete. To combat this problem, these individuals believed that, in addition to training youth, employers would have to devote resources to retrain and upgrade their current workforces. One of these industrial union representatives also recommended opening the youth apprenticeship programs to everyone so currently employed workers and dislocated workers could also benefit from the on-the-job training and related instruction.

While wholeheartedly agreeing with the necessity of enhancing the skills of incumbent workers, the third industrial union official "disagree[d] with the thinking that [the youth apprentices] are going to be competitive. Employers are certainly not going to take a high school student, bring them into a plant, lay off an older worker, and say that the young student can do the work. That's idiotic. The older worker has been there. They've been around the equipment long enough to know more than that student would ever know. The youth will only enhance our educated and skilled workforce that we have to have to compete with other countries. I would

hate to think that we would set our younger generation aside because we felt intimidated by them affecting our jobs in some way. I think that is ridiculous."

Also advocating career advancement for older workers, a service/public sector official suggested the use of career ladders. "The ladder should prepare a place for the kids to go and a place for the incumbent workers to go when the kids move into their jobs. This requires the employer to provide ongoing career programs for all workers, not just the kids who get out of the youth programs." She also felt that others, including dislocated workers, could be placed in appropriate positions on the ladder.

While a building trades representative and a service/public sector official voiced their concerns about the displacement of older workers, they also pointed out this was not a new phenomenon. "This has been a historical problem. Young people have always been able to work more and faster and harder. This is not a new issue, and unions have always had to deal with it and have always put in protections for that. That is why seniority is a major principle of unionism . . . exactly for that reason," stressed the service/public sector representative.

Finally, one service/public sector official commented that "if the unions are going to say, 'You can have 17 year olds come in and you can pay them half of what you pay us,' what is the comparable commitment from the corporations? It has to be that they create more jobs . . . good jobs. If we're just talking about corporations saying, 'O.K., here are the 50 jobs in the U.S. that are worth anything and [through this program] we're going to have more people competing for them,' that's when people start saying, 'Well, forget it.'"

Youth as Cheap Labor. More than half of those interviewed were concerned that firms might use youth apprenticeship participants as a form of cheap labor. Four service/public sector, two building trades, and two industrial manufacturing sector officials expressed their uneasiness.

Three of the service/public sector and one of the building trades interviewees felt while employers were saving money on wages, they might fail to teach young people the skills envisioned by the program. To avoid this potential problem, one service/public sector representative suggested requiring employers to establish proficiency levels, from novice to master, to allow youth to move along that line in the work setting. Another thought skill contracts with the employers, including periodic evaluations of the students' progress, might prove effective. The building trades individual proposed that the youth could undertake a summer internship in his industry following their junior and senior years, and the Joint Apprenticeship and Training Councils would select the participants, evaluate the students' progress in those subjects pertaining to the trade, and hold them to a standard both on the job and in the schools.

An industrial union official raised the possibility of "revolving door training." In other words, as long as a student earns a low wage he or she remains employed, but "as soon as the subsidy or the low wage stops and the employer has to pay a decent wage, the young person is kicked out." To sidestep this abuse, "there should be some guarantee of employment if the person graduates. If they're not qualified, then they shouldn't graduate." He also thought some type of monitoring or reporting would be necessary.

The other official from this sector worried about low wages if a local area flooded the market with youth trained in a particular occupation. Again, monitoring was suggested.

Finally, the low wage potential of youth apprenticeships in non-mechanized occupations was mentioned by a service/public sector representative. "If a job does not have measurable, quantifiable types of skills associated with it where you can objectively measure the progress, there's a danger that an employer will bring people in at very low wages and keep insisting that they haven't achieved the skills they need to move on to the next level of pay and training. To stop this from happening, there would have to be formalized agreements and some way they could be enforced."

Basic Skills Deficiencies. For different reasons, three service/public sector officials felt this program could lead to youth spending less time learning sorely needed basic academic skills.

"[If these programs mean] less time spent in the classroom, kids who are already not graduating with basic academic skills will face even greater obstacles." This individual recommended schools devote sufficient time to basic education before initiating occupational training. In the same vein, another individual mentioned "there is always the problem of the number of hours the kids would work and the degree to which that would take away from their studies. It would have to be a very careful balance."

The third service/public sector representative also stressed the importance of basic academic credentials and feared "that schools may start to think they are just producing a worker for an assembly line, a maintenance job, or a worker for RCA or IBM and that should not be their sole mission. We have a responsibility to the child to teach them math, history, art, etc., and make sure they have those things as well for their development into adulthood. All citizens should have those basic things. Schools should not be totally driven to produce a worker."

Furthermore, this same official felt while career exploration was important, grammar school should be devoted to learning the 3Rs. "We should have much more basic goals for improving our elementary schools than making sure they know what kinds of careers there are."

Closing Future Career and/or Educational Options. Another concern expressed by four service/public sector, one industrial manufacturing sector, and four building trades representatives regarding this approach to preparing young people for work and adulthood was its potential to focus young people on acquiring only the narrow skills required by a specific occupation or a single employer and foreclose future career and/or educational options. Many of these individuals did not want the decision a young person made at the age of 16 to cripple them for the rest of their lives. During the interviews, numerous suggestions were made to sidestep these possible problems.

To allow for the transferability of skills from one occupation to another, the industrial union official advocated the development of skill credentials. "If a young person is working at XYZ Company and on his job he learns math skills, some electronics skills, and some machining skills, he'll receive credentials in those three areas. Well, let's say he moves on to another job, and it requires that you know skills in five different areas. He could take credit for those three skill areas that he's already learned and focus on the other two. It's a career ladder. It's a building process. It has to be in some way certified that no matter where he learns the skills, they would be transferable and equivalent."

One building trades official recommended a "practical approach to education" that would supply youth with both the academic and practical skills needed to select any path following high school. The schools would offer both a "technical curriculum" and an "academic curriculum" and possibly others to suit the different needs of the youths. "There has to be more than one system to take care of these kids because not everyone is going to be successful in one of these areas. If there is one thing [to promote], it's that one system or one curriculum should not prevent or must provide the basics to get into another."

While not wanting to trap students in a single occupation, many of these individuals felt students required more information on career choices than they presently receive. "High school counselors should be geared to condition the youth to what's out in the field. A lot of these counselors are college conscious, and that's what they promote, college. A lot of these youngsters are just not college-bound, and I think the counselors themselves should be more apprised of the different skills, different trades that are there for the students." One service/public sector and two other building trades representatives also expressed the need for improved career counseling. Moreover, these latter two individuals did not appreciate advisors' recommending the crafts as a lesser alternative for those students that couldn't get into college.

Additional methods of career selection assistance were also advocated. One building trades official suggested vocational survey courses in school, while another proposed assessing youths to determine their talents and desires. A service/public sector interviewee felt young people should be exposed to both the entry level occupation for a particular field and to the

jobs comprising the higher rungs on the career ladder. Moreover, she believed career choices must be tied to the labor market (i.e., training should only be offered in those occupations which will be in demand when the youth graduate). In addition, career exploration, as discussed in a previous section, was also mentioned. Finally, another service/public sector representative felt youth needed reassurance that "none of the decisions are life or death . . . that one thing leads into another. This whole idea is talked about as if you have to pick one job or career, and you're going to do this for the rest of your life so you better figure out exactly what you want to do."

Even with career education, one building trades official worried that some young people are "going to look at an occupation where they can earn the most money immediately while they're still in school, whether they like the occupation or not. I think that's going to be a real problem."

Using the Word "Apprenticeship." Several interviewees commented on the appropriateness of using the word "apprenticeship" in the title of this youth education and training program model.

One building trades representative believed the "first thing they can do indicate to these people that they're not apprentices. They're student workers or something other than apprentices. I don't want the program to be called apprenticeship, because I think it gives the wrong impression that those people would receive credit towards a registered program which they probably will not." Another building trades official agreed the term "apprenticeship" should not be used. In addition, an industrial manufacturing sector representative concurred that "there has to be some other name found. Apprenticeship is career training, and the kinds of things I'm seeing them talk about in some cases may be a career, but a career in a plant or with an employer."

Moreover, one other building trades representative added that many of the service sector unions may not "like the term 'apprenticeship' because they think that's a blue collar term."

Overexpanding Traditional Apprenticeship Programs. Concerns over the ability to expand the traditional apprenticeship programs to accommodate additional youth were also expressed.

To begin with, one service/public sector, one building trades and one industrial union official stated that the reason few young people participate in the traditional apprenticeship programs is due to the abolition of the maximum age limit for apprentices. In the building trades, young people can rarely compete with the more qualified applicants applying for the openings. Furthermore, the industrial manufacturing sector official commented that their "collective bargaining agreement is run by seniority, and therefore, when a job opening comes up, including an apprenticeship position, the most senior applicant is selected."

Even if they expanded their programs to accommodate more youth, one building trades official indicated they would have no jobs for them to enter. "We're in a recession. Who's hiring? If we were having to train X number of individuals, what would we do with them? We're looking at 15 to 20 percent unemployment for journeymen in some of the areas for some of the crafts." He also stated that if they couldn't place the youth, they would be training for their opponents, the non-union sector. Another building trades representative agreed with this latter viewpoint.

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Program Funding. Five union officials, one industrial manufacturing sector, one service/public sector and three building trades interviewees, were concerned about program funding.

"Where are you going to come up with the money? You're not going to implement anything without money," summarized one building trades representative. The industrial union official concurred and indicated his organization did not have the funds to "carry on any type of training" and doubted companies have the large amounts of money necessary. "There's going to have to be a hell of a lot of government funding available for this . . . a hellacious amount." In contrast, the service/public sector official felt the youth apprenticeship advocates would have to find employers willing to invest in their communities and provide monetary assistance for these programs.

The maintenance of program funding was also an issue. One building trades representative questioned the government's funding role in this endeavor. "I don't know this as a fact, but I would guess 'youth apprenticeship, American style' should probably be hyphenated with the words 'government grant.' When the government grant goes, youth apprenticeship is going to go too." A fellow building trades official wondered who would maintain the system in economic downturns. Finally, the continued monetary support of employers was discussed. "If you successfully complete the program and say, 'Hey, I don't want any part of this anymore,' are the employers going to be happy that they provided X number of dollars in training?" He also mentioned the problem his industry currently faces with employers who allow other companies to provide the training and, upon completion, offer the skilled workers jobs at higher wages.

Union Orientation. "If there's somewhere in the curriculum where they would have a little bit of schooling about what unions are about, how they came about, I think this would make the labor movement a lot more willing to participate in a much bigger way. What advantage is it for them to get involved if somewhere down the road they don't even get members out of it or they're not able to [teach] the population that goes through the particular school about union issues and concerns?" emphasized a service/public sector official. An industrial manufacturing sector interviewee expressed this same apprehension.

Job Security. One building trades, one industrial union, and two service/public sector officials questioned whether jobs would be guaranteed to the student apprentices following their completion of the programs.

Wages and Working Conditions. Two union interviewees, one from the building trades and one from the service/public sector, inquired about the youth participants' wages and working conditions, respectively. The first individual simply questioned who would determine the youths' wages, while the second asked, "What hours will they work? Who will determine what percentage of the time they spend on the job and what percent in the classroom at what point in their education?"

Miscellaneous Concerns. Throughout the interviews, the representatives raised a variety of other concerns regarding the youth apprenticeship model.

Building trades members' additional comments included:

"Youth apprenticeship programs must feed into lifelong learning career ladders."

"Insurance problems for student workers on construction sites would be enormous."

"Are the young people in the United States mature enough to be serious about this type of program?"

"In the German system, the kids go out and find their own employer sponsors. Here, if your family or acquaintance works for that individual, you're more likely to be hired or sponsored. What about the individuals who don't have kinfolk and/or friends and/or acquaintances? If you have the connections, you're going to make it. If you don't have them, you'll be left out in the cold."

"What you're talking about is a work release program while they're going to school. The economics of having someone that's going to be on the job site three days out of ten or a day and a half per week is not going to be very attractive to an employer, because the general workforce that the employer has is developed based on a team approach. If you only have an apprentice there a couple of days a week, you either have excess labor or, on the days when he/she is not working, not enough labor to comprise the team."

"Some building trades jobs are physically exhausting and backbreaking. Many are occupations that are needed, but are these the glamorous occupations that these kids are going to be steered into?"

One service/public sector interviewee also offered an additional comment:

"Though less and less, there is still a tradition in our industry of people's kids coming to work in the industry. If this program precluded a member from being able to get his or her kid into the industry, people would be very unhappy. But if there would be a way that a union member could hook his or her kid into this program, then I guess that would be just fine."

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D. The Compatibility of Youth Apprenticeship and Existing Registered Apprenticeship Programs

While varying greatly in what they considered appropriate levels, each interviewee who expressed an opinion believed that youth apprenticeship could link and/or be compatible with the existing registered apprenticeship programs. However, these respondents tended to define youth apprenticeship as a pre-apprenticeship feeder into the traditional system, more limited in reach and scope than many youth apprenticeship proponents would be comfortable with.

Linking the Systems. "Young people who are in youth apprenticeship programs should be perfect candidates for the apprenticeship system. They would be in much better shape to run the gauntlet of competition." Using the youth apprenticeship system as a pre-screening or preparedness device for youth hoping to enter the traditional apprenticeship programs was a linkage method offered by this industrial manufacturing sector official in addition to three building trades representatives, one service/public sector official, and an additional industrial union respondent. Several of these individuals also had further comments surrounding this general suggestion.

The service/public sector representative believed "it would be up to the joint partnership of traditional and youth apprenticeship programs whether they wanted to use those graduates as candidates for existing apprenticeship programs. The problem is that if you prepare 20 kids in a carpentry class in a high school vocational technical program and they only admit five into the traditional program, you have 15 kids who are ready to go to work for non-union contractors." He also maintained that the ultimate decision as to who should enter the traditional programs should continue to rest with the appropriate joint apprenticeship committee. "There is some concern that if some law or someone on the outside says: if a kid goes through this carpentry or electrical program they will automatically get one or two years lopped off or advance placement in the apprenticeship program without approval of the committee, that they are messing with the standards-setting process," and the careful balance of not producing more workers than there are jobs.

Moreover, quoted earlier as stating that any task undertaken by a youth apprentice in his industry would undermine a full-time worker's job, one building trades official suggested that efforts to prepare young people to

enter traditional apprenticeship should not have an on-the-job component. Schools should offer participants both "the academic skills and the skills to do practical work."

Finally, one of the industrial manufacturing sector officials stated that a well designed youth apprenticeship program would prepare the young participants for "not necessarily [just] an apprenticeship program, but any type of industrial program that might be there or any other industrial jobs that might require training. It would be a kind of pre-apprenticeship towards all types of training. And I'm not so sure if all students should go through a registered apprenticeship program, but they could certainly have similar programs directed in the same fashion as an apprenticeship program to give them some overall vision of what the workforce and jobs are about, what type of training is needed, and so on."

On the issue of linking the systems, one building trades representative simply stated that the programs could be merged "only if the [traditional] apprenticeship committee runs the [youth] apprenticeship program. We have the expertise, they don't. We've been in town since year one, and they haven't learned anything . . . I guess they can at least spell 'apprenticeship' correctly now."

Compatibility of the Systems. Statements on the compatibility of the traditional and youth systems varied widely among the one building trades, one industrial manufacturing sector, and two service/public sector officials commenting on this topic.

Arguing that youth apprenticeship would be incompatible with the building trades' training system, a building trades representative explained that if the company in which the youth performed his/her on-the-job training kept the student following the completion of the program, he/she would bypass the regular registered apprenticeship selection process. "It's almost like an unfair competition with the others that would come in through the normal selection procedure." He did believe, however, as described above, the youth apprenticeship approach could be used as a pre-apprenticeship system and following graduation, the young people could go through the regular selection procedure.

With some qualifiers, the other three individuals felt the systems were compatible. Several of their supportive statements have been quoted in earlier sections of this paper.

Reflecting the needs in his industry and consistent with his interest in encouraging the transferability of skills from one occupation to another, one industrial union interviewee advocated the development of skill credentials that would allow youth apprentices to receive credit for the skills they learned in their programs. If qualified, they could transfer their skills into the traditional apprenticeship programs. He stressed that the development and implementation of this system would require collaboration between the youth and traditional apprenticeship program administrators.

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As described earlier, two service/public sector officials felt the traditional apprenticeship model should be expanded into non-traditional areas. One of these individuals described his plan as follows: "First, everyone has to agree up front and in unequivocal terms that we want to protect and advance the traditional apprenticeship program and not in any way undermine it with any new programs. Second, we then want to learn from these traditional programs some of the means that they use to develop national standards and curriculum, certification procedures, and so forth, so that those could be incorporated into youth apprenticeship programs. [The traditional apprenticeship program officials] can play a very important advisory role." The other service/public sector representative agreed the traditional programs should be studied and their "basics" applied in the development of other programs which "will take on different forms in different jobs."

Additional Comments. Four other union representatives commented briefly on this issue. One service/public sector individual felt that because his industry has very few apprenticeship programs, he could not really answer the question. Another interviewee from this sector simply stated that if the system focuses strictly on young people, it could erode other training programs at the workplace. She advocated equivalent standards for incumbents and workers entering a company. Finally, two of the officials, one industrial manufacturing sector and one service/public sector representatives, believed the current system should not be fully protected if this action cripples efforts to help many more individuals. "I think in the long range we have to be concerned that if you keep protecting certain kinds of things, where do you end up 10 years down the road?"

E. Applicability of the Youth Apprenticeship Model in Various Industries

Ranging from a very enthusiastic "yes" to a definitive "no" with conditional responses in between, thirteen of the fourteen individuals interviewed expressed an opinion on the appropriateness of this model for his/her industry. In general, the industrial manufacturing sector and service/public sector representatives were favorably inclined towards the model's introduction, while the building trades officials expressed hesitancy and opposition.

Two industrial manufacturing sector interviewees provided some of the most positive responses, and the third's reaction proved more guarded. The favorably inclined mentioned employers' control over training in their industries and the lack of training currently occurring. As one stated, "They don't really have formalized training like they should have, so I'm glad to see this. If they do something, if they do anything, it's an improvement." However, this same person added a note of caution concerning a potential "whipsaw" problem. If the youth apprenticeship program was working well and had the cooperation of the unions in one industry or sector, schools and employers in other industries or sectors could point to

the successful effort and demand their labor officials agree to institute the program—even if the program were inappropriate for their field. "So there are internal problems that the success of the system can create for the labor movement." The third industrial union representative believed that while "there are courses that could be developed between some types of vocational education schools or community colleges and certain kinds of work efforts," this system would prove difficult to implement because of the current competitive nature of this individual's industry and the unpredictability of Washington. "Do you put in new technology today at the same time that the President is negotiating away the whole industry in Mexico? . . . Businessmen are cautious about investing money. They're saying, 'All I'm going to do is what I have to do to stay in business.'" With the current uncertainty in the industry, this individual felt the model would be met by a lack of enthusiasm.

While some expressed hesitancy, the majority of the service/public sector representatives supported the introduction of youth apprenticeship initiatives in their respective industries—at least in principle. In some cases, they felt it was worthwhile for other fields and areas too. "The question is, is it worth pursing only in the traditional areas or in any service industry . . . I think it's applicable in almost any area. Initially, I would not limit youth apprenticeship to any specific area or field. I would explore all of them and see whether or not it is appropriate," stated one official. Another interviewee from this sector agreed that "any industry that takes some sort of skill" could benefit from the model.

Two other service/public sector representatives concurred that the model was appropriate for their areas, but couldn't say how it might "fit in" and what form it might take. "We're very much across the board, and we represent so many different kinds of jobs. We're very interested in expanding this in those areas where we know that some of our people are already doing it. When it comes to jobs where there are no apprenticeship systems, I can say this . . . career development and mobility are among the issues that come up in the top two or three whenever our workers are surveyed as to what their concerns are. People feel locked into dead end jobs. If apprenticeship is one of the ways to have people build on their skills in a steady progression, so that beginners become experts, and that leads to jobs that pay living wages where people can have a decent lifestyle and some fulfillment and satisfaction in what they're doing, then that's very important to us. So we're concerned about expanding it, but we haven't figured out how to break down the jobs that people do. A lot of their jobs are in offices, and I think a lot more work, study, and thinking about the process has to be done to determine how some of these jobs can fit into an apprenticeship model or something like an apprenticeship model."

The final two service/public sector officials were less enthusiastic about the application of this approach. Preferring the "energy and dollars be put into post high school models, such as career ladders," one representative said she would prefer that this approach did not exist. She did believe,

however, that if this model was implemented, "the unions would need to be heavily involved." The other official felt the approach had minimal application because of the promotion structure in most of his industry's occupations. "It's a matter of union contract that allows the advancement of members. The [career] potential is there, but it depends on seniority, the right to bid on a job, and the right to bump into a job. The most senior person applying for a job is going to get it. But if you're willing to stick it out, the jobs get better all the time."

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Most building trades officials were either skeptical or adamantly opposed to the introduction of youth apprenticeship in their industries, although they didn't rule out its application in other sectors. As discussed earlier, two of these representatives advocated the youth system in their jurisdictions only as a preparedness device for young people hoping to enter their apprenticeship programs. In addition, one of these individuals wanted the assurance that the market "would not be flooded" and these individuals would enter the traditional program to receive the appropriate training. The other felt "if the union is going to get involved, then they should be in a position where they can hire [youths] once they're through with their internships." He did add that this might be an excellent model for other sectors.

"If labor and management were included in the design process and serve at the advisory and evaluation levels," another building trades official believed "it may make some sense to do some pilot programs." He complained that vocational education fails to keep pace with the changing technology used in the field or to train youth in demand occupations.

Finally, one building trades representative definitively stated, "For my industry, I see no reason to have youth apprentices, period . . . Let's call them what they are. They're student workers. In any industry that has a registered apprenticeship program, there's no need for calling anybody [else] apprentices. It doesn't fit. Any time there's a registered apprenticeship program in an area, I don't think there should be youth apprenticeship for our industry."

F. Union Involvement in the Youth Apprenticeship System

On the topic of how unions should be involved in any youth apprenticeship system, the interviewees argued for a key role for unions, emphasized the need for equal representation with employers in program management, mentioned roles for labor representatives on program committees and in other areas, and stressed the need for local participation and "ownership."

Central Role for Unions. Before discussing potential areas of participation, several union officials justified a key role for organized labor in the development and implementation of youth apprenticeship initiatives.

Four building trades, two service/public sector, and one industrial manufacturing sector representatives mentioned unions' vast knowledge regarding specific trades and their intimate experience in operating registered apprenticeship programs.

Moreover, two service/public sector interviewees discussed the unique perspectives of workers and the abilities of union personnel. "Workers will bring a different and valuable perspective as to the dynamics of work and the workplace that can be reflected in any youth apprenticeship program. Part of that ought to be what the rights and responsibilities of workers are, in addition to the skills they need. They have a right to organize, they have the responsibility to show up on time, and things of that nature that are sometimes forgotten. So instead of just bringing in the engineers and technicians, it might be important to bring in the machinists, the carpenters, and anyone else that is actually doing these jobs." In addition, as the other service/public sector official pointed out, "Every program should have union involvement, even non-union programs . . . These people are going to give their opinions and not feel threatened or intimidated by any of the others serving on the committee. Otherwise, you'll have some employer picking out some employee from his plant or store and saying, 'Here's our representative.' That's an employer representative, not an employee representative." One industrial manufacturing sector and one service/public sector officials, however, questioned the "clout" of unions in areas with low representation.

Joint Participation. "Usually, when they want labor, they want one guy to sit on a twenty-five person board and then they say labor was represented. I'm talking about equal representation . . . The only programs that I am familiar with that are successful are joint programs, and they have to be equal."—Building Trades Official

To play a meaningful role in this system, three service/public sector and one industrial union representatives also expressed the need for joint programs and equal representation. To ensure that labor and management would work together to develop the programs and the youth effort would not circumvent or violate the collective bargaining agreement, the industrial union official suggested "the wages, terms of seniority and progression, and everything else be negotiated as part of the collective bargaining agreement."

Union Roles. Each union official interviewed stressed that "unions must be involved from square one," and "[u]nions must be involved in every step of the process." In addition, more specific roles were mentioned.

As discussed earlier, the officials' recommendations on ways to overcome some of their concerns revealed potential areas of participation. These individuals agreed that participation on youth apprenticeship governance boards, program planning committees, advisory groups on curriculum development, and implementation of mentoring programs in the workplace were all worthwhile areas for organized labor involvement. Other

specific areas of involvement cited during the interviews by one or two officials included: national and industry-wide skills standards development, testing, certification, and maintenance; program monitoring and follow up; job and task analysis; and apprentice wage scale determination, working conditions establishment, and job retention guarantees.

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Finally, three service/public sector, two industrial manufacturing sector, and one building trades officials emphasized the critical importance of involving local unions in any youth effort.

"First of all, we have to be invited, and secondly, we have to be there. But we run into very real problems because [union] business representatives are very busy people," stated one of the industrial union officials. The other sector representative agreed with this latter comment and also stressed the need for this local participation. "I think the kind of involvement [for unions] is going to be local involvement more than any other kind. There are things that you can do at the national level, but if you want to be there and have the feeling that progress is being made . . . [i]t's the local based involvement that we're talking about." One service/public sector representative mentioned, however, that the level of local involvement "will vary because in some places you have good experiences between the unions and schools and in other places you don't. It certainly depends on the organized labor climate. If you're in a place like Mississippi versus New Jersey or New York, you may have differing attitudes toward the involvement of organized labor in those kinds of settings."

To gain local participation and foster local "ownership" of the program, one service/public sector official suggested giving these union representatives "meaningful work." "If there really was a role, if this really was a situation [for example] where the people that were actually doing the jobs had a say in how the jobs were broken down so the skill needs were better understood or could say what skills they wish they had to do their jobs better . . . I think local [unionists] would really get involved. I think it's more than just a matter of waiting and giving people at the local level time. If that's done, there's a danger of when this does begin to be pervasive and there are boards all over the place putting together standards and the schools are changing, etc., it will appear to be one more institution that came from somewhere out there that has nothing to with the union at all."

Finally, one service/public sector and one building trades representatives felt that national program standards were necessary, although each local area must be able to "fine tune" the programs to meet their needs. The service/public sector official believed, "If this is a federal program and you want input from the local programs to be able to tie it all together, I'd have a meeting, have them review this, have them make comments, and maybe make, where appropriate, changes that might be necessary to make it more coherent with whatever local programs there might be. It's true that you wouldn't be able to match everything up, but the federal government should have a minimum standard program that the local

jurisdiction should be held to adhere to, and then if they wanted to improve on that, it would be up to the local jurisdiction . . . You can give them the shell, but they have to fill it in." Agreeing that local flexibility was essential, the building trades representative stated, "Sometimes you get rules on the national level that can't apply to the local level. What happens in one area does not always happen in another area . . . So it is important to have local involvement and flexibility."

G. Union Experiences Applicable to the Youth Apprenticeship Approach

With decades of combined experience operating education and training programs, many union officials offered lessons applicable to the development and implementation of youth apprenticeship.

Traditional Apprenticeship Approach Lessons. While knowledge of the traditional system directly or indirectly shaped many of the comments and suggestions presented throughout this paper and was used to justify a key role for labor in the proposed program, the union officials also specifically identified elements of the traditional system that could be applied to the youth apprenticeship approach.

Many of the successful and replicable elements of traditional apprenticeship were summarized well by one service/public sector official. "[W]hat the youth apprenticeship programs can learn from the traditional apprenticeship programs is tremendous . . . In other words, how you set national standards; how you go about putting together a national curriculum; how you go about setting up the standards for an apprenticeship system that ends up in a journeyman's card that is accepted universally around the country; how you keep the curriculum up to date if you're moving into laser beams and fiber optics and all of these other things that people in the trades are now working with; how you combine academic and on-the-job training and how you bring those things together, the contextual learning approach . . . They've got years and years of experience in that, and it's something that people in the schools really haven't appreciated, other than quality vocational programs. They know about it all." He also added that the traditional programs "have an assessment system which they're now calling, in education, 'authentic assessment.' This means that they know whether a person will be able to handle a proram or not . . . and they control the access to the programs so it's labor market sensitive, and you're not producing more workers than there are jobs."

Two other labor officials praised various aspects of the traditional programs. One, a building trades representative, mentioned the successful combination of on-the-job training and related classroom instruction and how, overall, the apprenticeship system offers the participants training for a skilled, lifelong career, not just a job. The other official, from an industrial

union, complimented the pre-apprenticeship programs "that give folks an insight into what they need to do [in a trade] and how they need to address getting into an apprenticeship."

Local Program Lessons. Other interviewees learned valuable lessons through the operation of various programs by their local affiliates.

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A local union's literacy program provided one service/public sector representative with three worthwhile findings. First of all, workers with skill deficiencies who were embarrassed by this shortcoming, had little self confidence, and/or had "given up on learning," failed to take advantage of the learning program. These were the very individuals the program was designed to assist. Second, the operators "had designed it on a self-paced model. They had all these computer programs and an instructor that could help you, but they found out that people are not brought up with that kind of self-discipline. They were used to being pushed in a classroom situation." Lastly, the learning program required "fine tuning," the official said. "Anytime we expect people to learn in a completely different way, there are going to be surprises and you can expect that things will not work out the way they did on paper." By learning from these experiences, she believed the youth apprenticeship designers could avoid similar problems or, at least, anticipate potential setbacks.

A second service/public sector official noted some lessons from two programs operated by her union's locals. To begin with, every program must include a "basic skills feeder" so that everyone "can be brought up to the same level and enter the training program." The operators also found contextualized learning was required to demonstrate the relevance of the training and, thus, provide the incentive for its completion. Furthermore, "[t]here must be adequate funding," often from employers.

One building trades representative derived a different lesson from his experience with various efforts including vocational education, industrial arts, cooperative education, career education, apprenticeship clearing-house, and work release programs. He stated, "Everything that is being suggested has already been tried . . . We have learned from these earlier demonstration projects what is effective and what is not effective . . . There have been all kinds of processes and strategies applied to resolve these issues, and there's a wealth of information out there. They don't need any more studies on a majority of these issues." He felt that before new endeavors are undertaken, past and current programs should be studied and the lessons from these programs applied.

Additional Lessons

Labor-Management Cooperation. Building on the general consensus that joint program management and equal representation are critical, two industrial manufacturing sector, one building trades, and one service/public sector officials believed that, once at the table, labor and management must cooperate to attain their goals. "It has to be on a level of mutual trust. People have to sit down and listen to both sides. They have to believe in the goals, and they have to believe that both parties are honestly working to meet the goals. They both have to listen to the flip side and to the concerns each has and to the problems they would create for each side. They have to be sensitive to that and work around these kinds of things. I think then you can do something." Stressing the same lesson, a fellow industrial union official thought the youth apprenticeship system could learn from labor's and management's past mistakes. "So many unions and managers have such a lack of communication that they not only can't get anything done in training, they can virtually get nothing done in any area. In a system where people communicate . . . it gives everyone insight into where the problems lie and who is behind the problems. If one group fails to understand and talk with the other, there are bound to be problems."

Program Planning and Design. Based on their past experiences, one service/public sector and one building trades representatives stressed the need for advance program planning and design. "First, the program itself has to be extremely well thought out and planned with goals in mind and periodic checks to insure that these goals are achieved. It can't be a burdensome program that is more administrative than practical." Moreover, he mentioned adequate staff must be provided or the funds necessary to hire enough personnel. "Unions don't have the resources and the staff available to run the [youth apprenticeship] programs like they should be without outside assistance." Also emphasizing staffing concerns, the building trades official stressed the need to select qualified individuals and involve them in the planning and implementation stages of the effort.

Union Philosophy. Finally, one building trades representative indicated the importance of incorporating the union philosophy into a youth program. "In order for most people to be successful as a wage earner, they need to band together to have some strength in bargaining. They need to understand the union philosophy: the benefits reaped by banding together which includes being more productive so that you have a job, so that your employer continues to be successful, and so that you can negotiate better benefits for the group."

III. Final Comments

Union Perspectives on New Work-based Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives

This report presents the attitudes of 14 labor officials in the spring of 1991 toward the youth apprenticeship approach. As the discussion reveals, there is a diversity of opinion not only among the union representatives interviewed, but also within each of the three sectors they represent. Moreover, it is likely that there would have been some variation in the results had different unions been selected to participate. However, while the findings cannot be seen as definitive, they highlight numerous union concerns, supportive views, and suggestions for improvement.

Obstacles preventing non-college bound youth from obtaining jobs with advancement potential, skilled work, and a living wage. Union officials identified six major hurdles confronting the "Forgotten Half." They include: the absence of the basic academic and higher order skills required of today's and tomorrow's workforces; the failure of the federal government to create a school-to-work transition system and focus more employment and training dollars and activities towards those youth that are not immediately "at-risk;" the deficiency of training opportunities in various industries; the shortage of positions to fit the qualifications of these young people; some youths' troubled backgrounds and the crippling effect this has on their performance; the absence of national skills standards, assessment, and certification systems required to obtain and maintain competitiveness; and the underdeveloped work ethic of many of these youngsters.

Positive aspects of the youth apprenticeship model. The labor representatives interviewed noted eight reasons to be supportive of the youth apprenticeship approach. This model could: create a national school-to-work/apprenticeship transition system; provide valuable job and related skills training; extend the highly effective traditional apprenticeship approach into new areas; introduce youth to numerous occupations and careers which may offer selection assistance; allow youth to understand the context in which they'll apply their learning; motivate young people to work harder by showing them the relevance of their education; encourage the positive interaction of youth and adults; and establish relationships between the youth and employers that could lead to job offers following successful program completion.

Concerns regarding the youth apprenticeship model and suggested solutions. These union officials focused on eleven areas of concern. This approach could: impact incumbent workers in a variety of negative ways; promote the use of program participants as a source of cheap labor; decrease the amount of time spent learning desperately needed basic academic skills; narrow future career and/or educational options by focusing on the acquisition of skills required by a single occupation or employer; weaken the meaning of the term "apprenticeship;" and increase the number of individuals with particular skills in already tight labor markets. Questions surrounding the sources and maintenance of program

funding, the opportunity to expose participants to the union philosophy, the availability of jobs following the program's completion, wages and working conditions, and a variety of other issues were also raised.

Compatibility of youth apprenticeship and existing registered apprenticeship programs. While opinions on the appropriate levels of linkage and/or compatibility of these two systems varied widely, each labor official expressing a view on this matter believed that some manner of linkage and/or co-existence was possible.

Applicability of the youth apprenticeship model in various industries. While the majority of the industrial manufacturing sector and service/public sector representatives expressed support for introducing youth apprenticeship initiatives in their industries, the building trades representatives were skeptical or opposed to it in their jurisdictions.

Union involvement in the youth apprenticeship system. While justifying a major role for unions due to their unique knowledge and talents and stressing the importance of equal representation with employers in program management to foster the program's success, the labor officials also enumerated roles for unions on the various committees involved in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of the system. In addition, they discussed the need for local involvement in and "ownership" of any serious effort.

Union experiences applicable to the youth apprenticeship approach. Unions' in-depth experiences operating traditional apprenticeship and/or other education and training programs revealed numerous lessons applicable to the creation and operation of a youth system. These included the need for labor-management cooperation, advance program planning and design, and the incorporation of the union philosophy into any national effort.

In future discussions of the possible implementation of the youth apprenticeship system, the views documented here merit further examination and serious consideration. With their experience and expertise, organized labor is an integral part of the employment and training landscape in this country and must be intimately involved in the design and implementation of any national initiative in this area. Their participation would benefit not only unions, but the entire nation when a superior program resulted from any coordinated effort.

Union Perspectives on New Work-based Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives

Appendix A

List of Union Officials Interviewed

From the Building Trades:

George Bliss
Assistant Director of Training
United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada

Ken Edwards
Director
Technical Services Department
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Lafayette Jackson
Apprenticeship Director
Apprenticeship Department
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3

Edward Trejo
Assistant Director of Apprenticeship and Training
International Union of Operating Engineers

Bruce Voss
Executive Director
International Masonry Institute
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen

From the Industrial Manufacturing Sector:

Charles Bradford
Director
Apprenticeship, Employment Training and Rehabilitative Programs
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

Henrietta Dabney
Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union

continued

Elmer Ransom
Chairman
Skilled Trades Department
International Union of Electronic,
Electrical, Salaried, Machine and
Furniture Workers

From the Service/Public Sector:

Anna Burger
Assistant to the President for Programs
and Services
Service Employees International Union*

Paul F. Cole
Secretary - Treasurer
New York State, AFL-CIO

Yvette Herrera
Assistant to the Executive
Vice President - Training
Communication Workers of America

Marvin Hrubes
Director
Communications and Research Department
United Food and Commercial Workers
International Union

Ken Reichard
Vice President and Trustee, Executive
Assistant to the President, and Director
Of Governmental Affairs
United Food and Commercial Workers
International Union, Local 400

Terry Rosen
Labor Economist
Department of Research
American Federation of State, County
and Municipal Employees

* Suzanne Miller, Coordinator of Worker Education, Service Employees International Union also attended the interview and contributed to the discussion, but is not counted as a separate interviewee.

Appendix B

Youth Apprenticeship Concept Interview Guide

After providing union representatives with the appropriate background information concerning the project, HRDI staff will pose a variety of questions, including the following:

Union Perspectives on New Work-based Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives

1. What do you see are the major obstacles facing young people who will not go directly on to a 4 year college from getting jobs that offer career advancement, opportunities for skilled work, and a living wage?

> That is, what are the roots of the labor market problems facing these young people, and why is it so difficult for them to find avenues into good careers?

2. Given your understanding of the youth apprenticeship model, what are the positive elements of this approach?

3. As a labor representative, what aspects of this model concern you? In what specific ways can each concern be addressed in the design of youth apprenticeship programs?

4. In order of their seriousness, what are the potential obstacles to union involvement in youth apprenticeship efforts? Can these be overcome through careful program design? Do you have specific suggestions?

5. Are there specific issues at the local level (as opposed to the national or international level) that are of particular concern to union officials?

6. How compatible is youth apprenticeship, as you understand it, with the existing system of registered apprenticeship? Are these in direct conflict? Or could they be parallel and complimentary systems?

> How can youth apprenticeship efforts be designed to increase compatibility with the existing apprenticeship structure? Or is it not possible?
>
> Can youth apprenticeship be designed so it serves youth well without harming existing apprenticeship programs?
>
> If yes, what safeguards and strategies would you recommend? If no, why not?

7. Would youth apprenticeship be a strategy worth pursuing in your industry? In other industries? In the building trades? Manufacturing? The service/public sector? If you think it is a model more suited for some industries and sectors than others, please explain.

8. The youth apprenticeship people are trying to design a system to improve the opportunities available to young people. What role should organized labor play in the creation, development, and implementation of these programs to make sure they are of high quality, have a solid design, and will have a minimal impact on traditional apprenticeship training? How can labor contribute to this whole policy debate and to improvement in the program design and implementation?

> Examples of labor involvement might include a role on youth apprenticeship governance boards, program planning committees, and advisory groups on curriculum development, and assisting in the implementation of mentoring programs in the workplace that would support youth apprentices.

9. If the youth apprenticeship model is not one of your preferred models, as a labor representative, what other strategies do you advocate for improving young people's access to the labor market and for advancing their skills development? Is it possible to expand traditional apprenticeship to include more young people and/or into new industries? Or do you see the need for other strategies? If so, what are the ones you find most attractive?

10. What lessons gleaned from your union's experience with training programs can be applied to the youth apprenticeship approach?

Appendix C

The Youth Apprenticeship Concept:
Summary from the Youth Apprenticeship, American Style Conference Report

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I. The Situation Facing Non-college Bound Youth

For the 50 percent of our young people who leave school with a high school diploma or less, there are few viable paths to the future. Those with enough "staying power" to graduate will have spent four years taking courses that are undemanding, doing work that is theoretical rather than applied, and attending classes in a school year so short that it assures that secondary school graduates in other countries will have one or two years more learning time than American youth. Many—20 percent nationwide and as many as 50 percent in some inner city neighborhoods—will simply drop out, and the school system will do little to encourage them to return.

With neither academic nor occupational skills of any real substance, non-college bound young people are simply released to a labor market that has little to offer them and has little interest in what they learned in school. A recent study showed that 90 percent of the employers surveyed ignore high school diplomas, believing graduates to be no better qualified than dropouts, and 98 percent never examine high school transcripts, believing the coursework to be irrelevant to their needs.

Poorly educated, unskilled, and unprepared for jobs with any kind of future, these young people drift from one low-wage job to the next well into their mid-20s. Some will complete their GED, others may enroll in vocational schools and community colleges. But beyond these modest steps, they have few opportunities to receive skill training once they leave school. Only one half of one percent of all employers provide worker training and only a handful invest more than two percent of their payroll on it. And most publicly-funded training is narrowly aimed at recently dislocated workers and targeted segments of the disadvantaged population. Training is seldom tied to industry standards (because few exist) and it is seldom organized in a manner that would lead to recognizable credentials.

Although joint labor-management apprenticeships in the U.S. train their graduates well, these excellent programs do not reach large numbers of young people. Fewer than two percent of U.S. high school graduates enter apprenticeships, and the average age of U.S. apprentices is in the mid-20s.

II. Youth Apprenticeship, American Style

There is growing interest in the U.S. in developing a national system for preparing youth for skilled, high-wage careers through a coherent combination of classroom and workplace learning. "Youth apprenticeship," structured to meet the unique conditions of the American labor market, may be one of the most attractive options.

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Youth Apprenticeship (American style) is usually defined as: a systematic mix of academic instruction in secondary and post-secondary schools with employment based training for students at a level of quality sufficient to certify the ability of individuals to perform entry-level tasks in skilled occupations capably and professionally.

Analysis of the operation of European apprenticeship-like systems; the unique cultural, social, and economic conditions in the United States; and the strengths and weaknesses of existing local programs designed to improve the school-to-work transition in America suggest several basic premises upon which any American-style youth apprenticeship system must be based:

- It must recognize and accommodate the diversity inherent in the American populace;
- It must be part of a broad effort to improve the linkages between the world of work and the world of high school, and not just for those who are not college-bound;
- It must provide early exposure to work experiences and genuine opportunities for workplace learning, with training wages paid by employers;
- It must result in formal, universally-recognized credentials that meet nationwide standards that are the product of the collaboration of government, education and labor agencies, union representatives, and business associations;
- It must assure that apprentices have opportunities to go on to further, college-level education, should they seek it, after receiving their apprenticeship credentials;
- It must encourage lifelong skill-building.

What might such a system look like? One analyst suggests this scenario: Between 7th and 9th grades, possibly earlier, students would begin to explore a wide range of occupations and careers through site visits, work "shadowing", job sampling, and employer visits to school. In the process, they would begin to learn the kinds of skills that will be required of them when they finish school.

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In the 10th grade, students begin to receive career counseling, interview employers, and seek apprenticeship openings, though some may opt for a purely academic track. Students and employers would sign apprenticeship contracts by the end of the school year.

During the 11th and 12th grades, students would spend part of each day (or week) in school studying academic courses crafted explicitly to be relevant to the world of work, as well as technical and occupational courses relevant to their chosen field. They would also spend time learning on-the-job under the guidance of a certified workplace instructor. Workplace learning would increase gradually from 30 to perhaps 75 percent of the day (or week) as they moved toward completion of 12th grade. At that point they would take an interim examination qualifying them for their high school diploma and permitting them to continue to the third year of their program.

During the third year, while pursuing further education at nearby community colleges, they would spend the bulk of their time at the worksite developing their skills in preparation for their final certification examination. Having passed the exam, they could choose to remain as employees with their current employer, pursue further technical or academic education, or take their credentials with them to work with another firm elsewhere in the country.

Proponents of youth apprenticeship argue that such a national system would produce many benefits: a growing supply of skilled workers; increased productivity and higher wages for non-college workers and a corresponding reduction in America's growing income gap; promising careers for all young people, not just the college-bound; and a reduction in the social and economic consequences of our failing current system—dropouts, youth unemployment and underemployment, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and welfare dependency.

Appendix D

Essential Elements of Model Youth Apprenticeship Programs

Introduction

The following pages propose a set of essential elements for youth apprenticeship programs designed to link employers, secondary schools, and postsecondary institutions in the provision of alternative routes from high school to high skill careers.

This document reflects discussions involving two different groups: the National Advisory Group for Jobs for the Future's National Youth Apprenticeship Initiative; and the group of co-sponsors of the "Youth Apprenticeship, American Style" conference organized by the W.T. Grant Foundation Commission on Youth and America's Future. It was prepared by Jobs for the Future.

This document does not necessarily reflect the views of the Human Resources Development Institute, AFL-CIO, or the union representatives interviewed in this study.

Union Perspectives on New Work-based Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives

What is 'Youth Apprenticeship'?

Youth apprenticeship programs combine, at a minimum, three basic elements:

1. **Work experience and guided learning opportunities provided for participants by employers within an industry or occupation cluster;**
2. **A structured linkage between secondary and postsecondary components of the program, leading to a high school diploma, postsecondary credential, and certification of occupational skills;**
3. **Close integration of academic and vocational learning and of school and workplace experiences through planning and ongoing collaboration between schools, employers, relevant unions, and other key institutions and through innovations in curriculum and instructional strategies in the classroom and at work.**

The following sections elaborate on design elements—including issues of structure, governance, and the responsibilities of employers, schools, and participants—that are essential if youth apprenticeship is to be a viable, attractive and worthwhile opportunity for large numbers of American young people. The final sections highlight desired outcomes for participating institutions and learners.

1. Structure

- Program duration of at least two years, including at least one year of secondary and one year of postsecondary education.
- Preceded by a strong career development program beginning with career awareness in elementary school and career exploration in middle school and early high school years.
- Part-time employment during the school year with employer committed to providing guided learning experiences at the workplace.

- Classroom-based program for academic learning, generic literacy and employability skills.
- Structured mechanisms for integration of work experience and classroom instruction (*e.g.*, seminar co-taught by school and workplace personnel; regular meetings of teachers and workplace supervisors to enable use of work experiences in academic and vocational courses; summer internships for teachers with participating employers).
- Adequate initial and ongoing opportunities for staff development of teachers and workplace trainers who will be responsible for the integration of academic and occupational instruction and learning.
- Structured summer component integrating school-based learning and paid work experience.

2. Governance

- Involvement in program planning of key decisionmakers from: employers, industry-specific and statewide employer associations, school district(s), postsecondary institution(s), relevant labor organization(s), state and local government.
- Governance by a board comprised of leaders of these institutions.

3. Employer and Labor Roles and Responsibilities

- Work out mutually-agreeable pattern of participation and collaboration between employers and unions representing workers in participating firms and industries in undertaking the following activities.
- Participate in specifying job- and employability-related competencies that graduates will be expected to have mastered.
- Participate with educators in curriculum design and development.
- Provide work experience and guided learning opportunities for participants for the duration of their enrollment in program.
- Impart agreed-to skills and knowledge through work and training assignments.
- Provide each participant with a structured mentoring relationship with an employee of the firm or organization.
- Designate one or more persons within the firm who will be trained in how to work with and train young adults.
- Participate in orientation and staff development activities to prepare supervisors and employees for participation in program.
- Monitor own and participants' progress toward achieving skill development goals.
- Agree to non-discrimination in selection of apprentices and to non-displacement of existing workers by program participants.
- Sign contract with school and apprentice that specifies these and other agreed-upon roles and responsibilities.

4. Secondary School Roles and Responsibilities

- ❖ Deliver instruction that prepares young adults for both productive economic participation and effective citizenship.
- ❖ Impart academic and work-related skills and knowledge (such as problem-posing, problem-solving, and critical thinking) general enough to be transferable to a broad range of work and life situations.
- ❖ Implement applied academics and cooperative learning approaches to classroom learning that draw from the work experience of participants.
- ❖ Offer participants structured opportunities for reflection on their work experience, in academic classes and through sound career counseling.
- ❖ Ensure that program exit by a participant before the twelfth grade does not jeopardize high school progress and graduation.
- ❖ Provide adequate orientation, training, and ongoing staff development opportunities in work-based learning approaches for program instructional staff.
- ❖ Ensure that teachers develop a solid understanding of the nature and sequencing of participants' workplace activity.
- ❖ Sign contract with students and employer that specify roles and responsibilities.
- ❖ Sign letter of agreement with postsecondary school specifying the relationship between their respective components.

5. Postsecondary Institution Roles and Responsibilities

- ❖ Offer pre-admission or special consideration to participants who successfully complete the first two years of the program and earn their high school diploma.
- ❖ Participate in the process of designing the program's secondary school curriculum.
- ❖ Offer one or more courses specially designed for program participants and facilitate scheduling that enables participants to stay at their apprenticeship job.
- ❖ Provide career development services to participants, including counseling and placement assistance.
- ❖ Sign letter of agreement with secondary school specifying the relationship between the two components of the program.
- ❖ Sign letter of agreement with students and employers specifying roles and responsibilities.

6. Student Roles and Responsibilities

- ❖ Evidence commitment to program, measured by attainment of agreed-upon benchmarks, such as attendance at school and workplace and demonstration of specified learning outcomes.
- ❖ Have structured input into program assessment and redesign over the course of the program.

- Sign contract with school and employer that specifies roles and responsibilities of each.

7. Expected Outcomes for Successful Participants

- Certification of academic and occupational proficiencies that reflect high expectation/high achievement curriculum and are pegged to world-class standards.
- Award of high school diploma after the equivalent of twelfth grade.
- Award of credential of occupational skills achievement recognized at least within the state.
- Award of Associates Degree if participant meets all requirements or of transferable postsecondary credits toward degree earned during the course of the program.
- Ability to continue postsecondary learning in a four-year college program.
- Successful placement in general occupational area for which training has been provided.
- Access to career ladder that progresses to high quality, high wage career.

8. Other Expected Outcomes

- Evidence of employer reconsideration and redesign of work organization to make the firm more of a learning, high performance organization.
- Evidence of progress by schools in integrating problem-solving, learning-to-learn, and other "necessary skills" and hands-on instruction into programs and curricula for all students.
- Evidence of institutionalization of new forms of collaborative effort among employers, labor organizations, school districts, and postsecondary educational institutions.

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